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## Family income erodes, child abuse and neglect rises *Kids Count report seeks to improve Michigan child well-being*

LANSING, Mich. – More Ingham County kids are growing up in families struggling to make ends meet, according to the 2013 Kids Count in Michigan report, which offers clear steps to a brighter future for those children.

Statewide, the most dramatic change in the report was a 53 percent increase in the rate of young children who qualified for federal food assistance between 2005 and 2012. More than one in every three qualified for nutritional help because their families were living on incomes under 130 percent of poverty (about \$31,000 a year or less for a two-parent, two-child family).

Ingham County ranked No. 58 of 83 counties (No. 1 has the best, or lowest, rate) with 40.3 percent of young children (ages 0-5) eligible for food assistance, compared with 37 percent statewide.

“Though the recession officially ended years ago, the toll on children is still apparent with the persistently high number of children living in need. It’s especially troubling that young children are growing up in poverty because research shows a deeper lifelong impact of deprivation during early childhood,” said Jane Zehnder-Merrell, Kids Count in Michigan director at the Michigan League for Public Policy.

There were 24.2 percent of children living in poverty in Ingham County in 2011, a jump of 15 percent since 2005. Statewide, the child poverty rate increased 34 percent in that time period. Nearly 560,000 children, about one in every four in Michigan, lived in poverty in 2011.

The Kids Count report also found a big increase – 41 percent – statewide in the number of children living in families investigated for abuse and neglect between 2005 and 2012. A total of nearly 207,000 children – the highest number in 22 years – were living in investigated families in 2012.

Ingham County ranked No. 55 with 128.5 children per 1,000 living in homes investigated for abuse or neglect compared with the statewide average of 90 children per 1,000.

The report, which ranks counties on 15 areas of child well-being, found five dramatically worsening trends – all tied to eroding family economic security. Six areas showed improvements, while three remained about the same. One indicator could not be tracked over time.

Livingston County ranked No. 1 (or best) on five of the trend indicators and Lake County ranked last (worst) on eight of the 15 indicators. Even well-to-do Livingston County, however, experienced a big rise in child poverty.

To improve conditions for children, the report recommends that Michigan policymakers:

- Reinstating the Earned Income Tax Credit to 20 percent. The credit helps low-income working families afford transportation to stay on the job. It was cut to 6 percent starting in tax year 2012.
- Increasing the child care subsidy amount and eligibility level so low-income working families have the ability to use licensed child care while parents work or search for jobs.
- Supporting the successful implementation of the Affordable Care Act.
- Expanding Healthy Kids Dental into the five remaining counties.
- Investing in early childhood, paying attention to the important birth to age 3 time period.
- Raising the minimum wage.

“Together, these recommendations have the power to make a positive difference in the lives of low-income families in our state by encouraging work and making kids and families healthier,” said Gilda Z. Jacobs, president and CEO of the Michigan League for Public Policy.

The biggest improvement statewide was a 33 percent drop in children living in out-of-home care. There were almost 17,000 Michigan children living outside their homes in 2005, compared with just 10,300 in 2012. The drop likely reflects improvements resulting from a court-approved settlement in a lawsuit filed against the state.

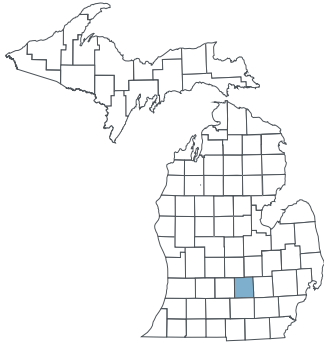
Also improving were the report’s education indicators. Fourth-grade reading scores improved 20 percent, while eighth-grade math scores improved slightly at 1 percent between 2008 and 2012. Ingham County saw a 17 percent improvement in fourth-grade reading and a 3 percent worsening in eighth-grade math.

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**Kids Count in Michigan project is part of a broad national effort to improve conditions for children and their families. Funding for the project is provided by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Detroit-based Skillman Foundation, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Foundation, local United Ways and the Battle Creek Community Foundation. More state and local data are available at the Kids Count Data Center, [www.datacenter.kidscount.org](http://www.datacenter.kidscount.org).**

# INGHAM

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION (ALL DATA ARE FOR 2012 UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.)



POPULATION	2005	2011	% CHANGE
<b>Total population</b>	278,592	281,806	1.2%
<b>Child population 0-17</b>	62,967	56,946	-9.6%
• Ages 0-4	18,232	15,787	-13.4%
• Ages 5-9	16,899	15,593	-7.7%
• Ages 10-14	17,317	15,958	-7.8%
• Ages 15-19	25,381	27,090	6.7%

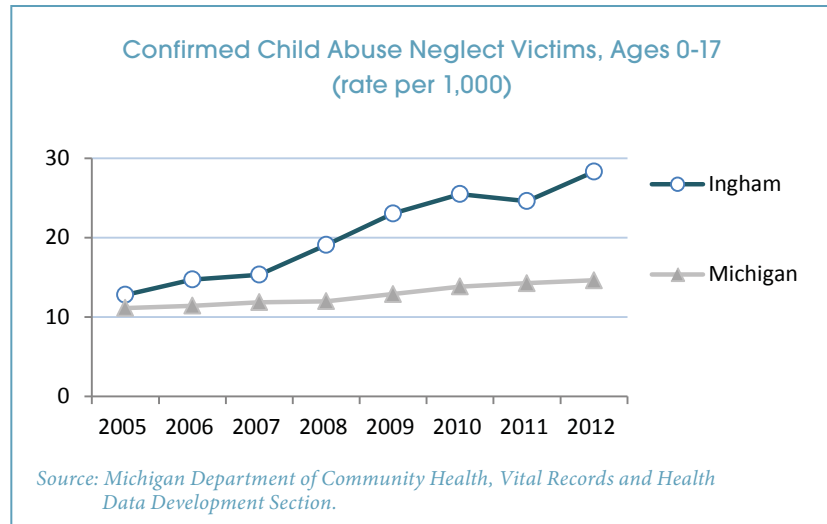
ECONOMIC CLIMATE	COUNTY	MICHIGAN
Unemployment	7.8%	9.1%
Median household income (2011)	\$42,371	\$45,931
Average cost of full-time child care-month (2013)	\$582	\$532
Percent of full-time minimum wage (2013)	46.8%	42.8%

FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAMS	NUMBER	PERCENT	MI RATE
<b>Children receiving...</b>			
• Subsidized child care, ages 0-12 <sup>1</sup>	1,507	3.7%	3.3%
• FIP cash assistance <sup>1,2</sup>	2,457	3.8%	4.5%
• Food Assistance Program <sup>1,3</sup>	19,907	31.0%	29.1%
<b>Children with support owed</b>			
• Receiving none (% of those owed)	5,446	30.5%	30.0%
• Receiving less than 70% of amount	11,516	64.4%	61.6%
• Average amount received (month)	\$206	—	\$228



### ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

Children with health insurance	56,535	94.8%	95.6%
Children, ages 0-18, insured by...			
• Medicaid <sup>1</sup>	26,661	41.6%	41.0%
• MIChild	807	1.3%	1.5%
Fully immunized toddlers, ages 19-35 months (for the series 4:3:1:3:3:1) <sup>1</sup>	3,590	74.3%	74.6%
Lead poisoning in children, ages 1-2			
• Tested	2,852	46.3%	38.2%
• Poisoned (% of tested)	105	3.7%	4.8%
Children, ages 1-14, hospitalized for asthma (rate per 10,000) <sup>4</sup>	140	30.4	17.2
<b>Children with special needs</b>			
Babies with a birth defect <sup>**</sup>	355	10.7%	6.6%
Students in Special Education <sup>1</sup>	5,755	13.1%	13.8%
Children receiving Supplemental Security Income (rate per 1,000) <sup>1</sup>	1,296	22.8	20.3



<sup>1</sup> As of December 2012.

<sup>2</sup> Family Independence Program.

<sup>3</sup> State name for the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly called "food stamps."

<sup>4</sup> Annual rate and number are based on the three-year period 2009-2011 and only for counties with a total number over 20.

Note: Percentages reflect percent of population unless otherwise noted.

\* Sometimes a rate could not be calculated because of low incidence of events or unavailable data.

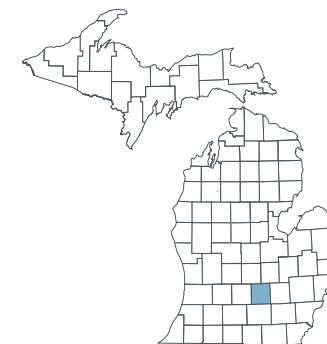
\*\* Based on three year period 2009-2011.

N/A not available.

See Data Notes and Sources for details.

TRENDS IN CHILD WELL-BEING

	BASE YEAR		CURRENT YEAR		RANK <sup>1</sup>	MI RATE	PERCENT CHANGE IN RATE	
	NUMBER	RATE	NUMBER	RATE			WORSE	BETTER
<b>Economic Security</b>								
	<b>2005</b>		<b>2011</b>					
Children in poverty, ages 0–17	13,004	21.1%	13,486	24.2%	36	24.6%	15	
			<b>2012</b>					
Children, ages 0–5, eligible for SNAP <sup>2</sup>	5,578	25.8%	7,617	40.3%	58	36.7%	56	
			<b>2006</b>					
Students eligible for free/reduced price school lunches <sup>3</sup>	16,809	35.8%	19,973	45.6%	21	48.2%	28	
<b>Health</b>								
	<b>2003–05 (avg)</b>		<b>2009–11 (avg)</b>					
Less than adequate prenatal care	N/A	N/A	971	29.2%	33	29.4%		
Low-birthweight babies	302	8.2%	261	7.9%	52 of 81	8.4%	4	
Infant mortality (per 1,000)	28	7.7	19	5.6	13 of 47	7.1	27	
Child/Teen deaths, ages 1–19 (per 100,000)	19	25.0	20	28.4	29 of 52	27.6	14	
<b>Family and Community (per 1,000)</b>								
Births to teens, ages 15–19	366	28.1	296	21.3	16	30.2		24
	<b>2005</b>		<b>2012</b>					
Children in investigated families	5,394	78.7	7,317	128.5	55	90.1	63	
Confirmed victims	877	12.8	1,612	28.3	70	14.6	121	
Children in out-of-home care	526	7.7	466	8.2	64 of 78	4.5	7	
<b>Education (not proficient)</b>								
	<b>2008</b>							
Fourth-graders (MEAP reading)	1,267	39.4%	1,018	32.6%	55	31.9%		17
Eighth-graders (MEAP math)	2,176	67.0%	2,213	68.8%	32	67.5%	3	
High school students (MME reading)	1,292	42.9%	1,153	42.2%	33	44.1%		2
	<b>Class of 2007</b>		<b>Class of 2012</b>					
Students not graduating on time	927	24.4%	867	25.4%	65	23.8%		4



<sup>1</sup> A ranking of 1 means a county has the “best” rate compared with other counties in the state. Unless noted, the ranking is based on 82–83 counties.

<sup>2</sup> Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

<sup>3</sup> Family income is below 130 percent poverty level.

\* Sometimes a rate could not be calculated because of low incidence of events or unavailable data.

MME - Michigan Merit Exam

N/A not available.

Missing bars indicate no change or a rate could not be calculated; a “0” reflects no change. Percentage change is calculated with unrounded rates.